

Docket No. AUS920030795US1

CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A method of transmitting information on a network, comprising:

sending information to a plurality of clients across said network, wherein each active client is allocated a corresponding initial amount of bandwidth for transfer of information, according to a priority assigned to said client;

when a first active client is operating with a respective allocation and a portion of said first client's respective allocation is not used in a given time period, reducing said first client's respective allocation by the amount of said portion and redistributing said portion of bandwidth to other active clients, each of said other active clients having used all of a respective allocation of bandwidth;

wherein said method seeks to utilize all portions of available bandwidth.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said portion of bandwidth will be redistributed according to a same system of priority as the initial allocation of bandwidth.

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3. The method of claim 1, wherein an initial amount of bandwidth allocated to each active user is recalculated each time a user changes status from active to inactive or inactive to active or a user's priority changes.

4. The method of Claim 1, further comprising taking a small amount of bandwidth away from a first group of users that are operating with a respective amount of bandwidth greater than a respective initial allocation and redistributing said small amount of bandwidth to ones of a second group of users that are both operating with a respective allocation of bandwidth less than a respective initial allocation and are using all of said respective allocation.

5. The method of Claim 1, wherein said network is the Internet.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein respective initial amounts of bandwidth are allocated as a calculated percentage of total bandwidth.

7. The method of Claim 6, wherein each priority three client receives an initial allocation of one part, each priority two client receives an initial allocation of two parts, and each priority one client receives an initial allocation of six parts.

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8. A server for transmitting information on a network, said server comprising:

an input device for receiving requests on said network from a plurality of active users;

an output device for providing information through said network to said plurality of active users;

a processor connected to said input device and to said output device to process requests and provide information; and

an allocation program executed by said processor, said allocation program being connected to provide allocations of bandwidth for sending information successively to ones of said plurality of active users, said allocation program comprising:

first instructions for allocating a first portion of bandwidth to ones of said active users having a first priority and for allocating a second portion of bandwidth to ones of said active users having a second priority; and

second instructions for determining a first amount of bandwidth of a first user's allocation that has not been used, reducing said first user's allocation by said first amount, and redistributing said first amount of bandwidth to other active clients, each of said other active clients having used all of a respective allocation of bandwidth.

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9. The server of Claim 8, wherein said second instructions redistribute said first amount of bandwidth according to a same system of priority as said first instructions.

10. The server of Claim 8, wherein said first instruction are performed each time one of the following events occurs: a new user requires an allocation, an existing user no longer requires an allocation, or a user's priority is changed.

11. The method of Claim 8, further comprising third instructions for taking a respective amount of bandwidth away from a first group of users, each of said first group of users operating with an amount of bandwidth greater than allocated in said first instructions and redistributing said respective amount of bandwidth to a second group of users, each of said second group of users both operating with a respective allocation of bandwidth less than a respective initial allocation and using all of said respective allocation.

12. The method of Claim 8, where said network is the Internet.

13. The method of Claim 8, wherein respective initial amounts of bandwidth are allocated as a calculated percentage of total bandwidth.

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14. The method of Claim 13, wherein each priority three client receives an initial allocation of one part, each priority two client receives an initial allocation of two parts, and each priority one client receives an initial allocation of six parts.

15. A computer program product on a computer readable medium, said computer program product comprising:

first instructions for allocating a first percentage of bandwidth to ones of said active users having a first priority and for allocating a second percentage of bandwidth to ones of said active users having a second priority;

second instructions for determining a first amount of bandwidth of a first user's allocation that has not been used, reducing said first user's allocation by said first amount, and distributing said first amount of bandwidth to other active clients, each of said other active clients having used all of a respective allocation of bandwidth.

16. The computer program product of Claim 15, wherein said second instructions redistribute said first amount of bandwidth according to a same system of priority as in said first instructions.

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17. The computer program product of Claim 15, wherein said first instruction are performed each time one of the following events occurs: a new user requires an allocation, an existing user no longer requires an allocation, or a user's priority is changed.

18. The method of Claim 15, further comprising third instructions for taking a respective amount of bandwidth away from a first group of users, each of said first group of users operating with an amount of bandwidth greater than allocated in said first instructions and distributing said respective amount of bandwidth to a second group of users, each of said second group of users operating with an amount of bandwidth less than allocated in said first instructions.

19. The method of Claim 15, where said network is the Internet.

20. The method of Claim 15, wherein said first instructions allocate respective initial amounts of bandwidth as a calculated percentage of total bandwidth.

21. The method of Claim 20, wherein each priority three client receives an initial allocation of one part, each priority two client receives an initial allocation of two parts, and each priority one client receives an initial allocation of six parts.